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## Deposed Symbol

By Murray Kempton

Earl Browder has resigned himself to appearing before a United States Senate investigating committee as a responsive, if not entirely friendly, witness on the 15 years when the American Communist Party was most powerful and he was its major symbol.

O. John Rogge, Browder's attorney, said today that the deposed former Communist leader expects to testify sometime in the next three weeks before the Senate Committee on Rules and Organization, of which Sen. Jenner (R-Ind.) is chairman.

Rogge said Browder would be an expert witness on the "organizational strength" of the Communist Party.

Browder was deposed as the American party's leader in 1945. After eight years of near-silent exile, he announced last year that he had abandoned all hope in communism and the Soviet Union. The investigators have been seeking him out ever since, most fruitfully in a number of recent conferences between Browder and Municipal Judge Robert Morris, former counsel to the Jenner Committee.

Rogge said that Browder has indicated his readiness to testify before the Jenner Committee in large part because of his "trust in Judge Morris' integrity."

When he appears, he will detonate few bombs, and there seems little chance of fresh sensation in his testimony. Earl Browder is a defected Communist, but he is not a repentant or an apologetic one.

He contends that his career in politics involved few sins and many acts of virtue and that the period in the Thirties when most Americans seemed as tolerant of the Communists as they seem terrified of them today was a constructive and exciting one.

He is likely to deny any knowledge of Communist espionage and declare that he is still prepared to believe only that there might have been two Communist parties, the legal one he ran and a shadowy underground of whose activities he says he was unaware.

What headline names Browder drops will be to illustrate only the tolerance which he says most Americans regarded the Communists in the early Thirties and which he asserts produced the atmosphere in which many persons were drawn into party associations for which they suffer today.

He is expected, as an instance, to describe a conversation during which Gen. Douglas MacArthur indicated the lively curiosity about Communist aims which Browder says was prevalent in 1935.

He will say that John L. Lewis invited the Communists to help him organize the CIO in 1935. He will recall that Thomas E. Dewey was happy for the support of a Communist trade union committee when he ran for District Attorney of New York in 1937.

He will report that the Office of Strategic Services, when Allan Dulles was its deputy director in World War II, knowingly recruited American Communists to work with anti-Nazi underground groups in the occupied countries.

These are not so much revelations as illustrations from what is almost public knowledge. Browder has already said that he can throw little, if any, public light upon the Communist underground in government which other defectors like Whittaker Chambers and Louis Budenz have described. He will disclaim any links with Franklin Roosevelt except public support of the New Deal during various periods of the party line.

If pressed for the names of Communists in government, there is no indication the Browder would not claim the Fifth Amendment privilege.

In general, he will deny that his party made any attempt to infiltrate the government and assert to the contrary that it reserved its brightest young men for assignment to the labor, youth and "peace" movements which were the focal points of its semi-open, "mass" activity.

Judge Morris has talked to Browder enough to have a general idea of what he is likely to say and its generally low sensation content. The indications are that Judge Morris would like to have Browder testify anyway, and that the Jenner Committee is disposed to have him.

Browder will testify under the shadow of a Department of Justice indictment against himself and his wife Raissa Irene for perjury. This fact appears to have little to do with his decision.

If there is a Jenner wing of the Republican Party which wants to listen to him and an Eisenhower wing which wants to jail him, Browder is by now wise enough to have few illusions that he will get much personal profit from that struggle.

What seems more important to Browder is a chance to get any forum to tell his story. The core of his testimony will be his unshaken belief that his Communist party did more good than harm and that, when it was most influential, it filled a national need for social protest and awareness of international problems.

This, of course, is a thoroughly debatable proposition but Browder is unregenerate in clinging to it. That attitude should make him the least apologetic cooperator with an investigating committee in a long time.

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